

OKEHAMPTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health 1944.



Okehampton.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit an annual report on the health and sanitary circumstances of your district for the year 1944.

The general health of the population was good throughout the year and infectious disease notifications were below average.

The birth rate slightly exceeded the death rate but neither compare at all favourably with the respective rate for England and Wales as a whole. Far more energetic meanings will have to be taken than are at present contemplated if a dire fall in population which was well under weigh before the war is to be prevented. In this respect I feel it necessary to report that the staff of the sanitary department is quite in-adequate at the present time to deal with the imperative needs of the district.

Staff of Public Health Department.

Medical Officer of Health (Part Time)

E.D. Allen-Price, M.D.(State Medicine) M.B.,Ch.B.,D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector and Housing Surveyor

Mr.L.R. Chapman, Cert.R.S.I. & S.I. Cert. of Meat & Foods.

Assistant Sanitary Inspector.

Mr.J.F. Hayhurst, Cert.R.S.I. & S.I. Cert. of Meat & Foods.

Section A. - General Statistics.

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Area in acres | 132,514. |
| Population | 12,890. |

Vital Statistics.

| | Males. | Females. | |
|-------------------------|--------|----------|--------------------|
| Live births. Legitimate | 93 | 88 | |
| Illegitimate | 3 | 7 | |
| Total | 96 | 95 | Male & Female 191. |

| | |
|---|------|
| Birth rate per 1,000 resident population | 14.8 |
| England and Wales | 17.6 |
| Still births | 6 |
| Still birth rate per 1,000 live and still birth | 30 |

Deaths.

The number of deaths registered from all causes were 178.

| | |
|---------|----|
| Males | 80 |
| Females | 98 |

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|------------------|--------------------------|
| Death Rate | 13.8 |
| England & Wales | 11.6 |
| Infantile deaths | 5 |
| Death Rate | 26 per 1,000 live births |
| England & Wales | 46 " " " " |

Causes of Deaths.

| | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|
| 1. | Infectious diseases. | |
| | Tuberculosis | 5 |
| | Influenza | 2 |
| 2. | General Diseases | |
| | Cancer | 20 |
| | Diabetis | 3 |
| | Cereberal Haemorrhage | 20 |
| | Heart diseases | 60 |
| | Bronchitis | 10 |
| | Pneumonia | 7 |
| | Gastric Ulcer | 1 |
| | Infantile Diarrhoea | 2 |
| | Digestive diseases | 2 |
| | Nephritis | 7 |
| | Prematernity Etc. | 4 |
| | Violent Causes | 6 |
| | All other Causes | 29 |

The majority of people lived to a good age.

Section B.

General provision of health services is the same as reported in previous years.

Institutional arrangements for maternity cases is entirely inadequate and representations on this subject have been made on several occasions to the County Authority.

A new ambulance stationed in Okehampton is administered by the St. John Ambulance Brigade and gives an efficient twenty four hour service.

Section C. - Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supplies - 22 water samples have been taken of Public Supplies from reservoirs, wells and springs, with the following results:-

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Satisfactory | 14 |
| Unsatisfactory | 8 |

The unsatisfactory samples were taken from reservoir supplies at Sampford Courtenay, Bratton Clovelly, Chagford, Drewsteignton and North Tawton, and from pump supplies at Coombe Bow, Bridestowe and Harpers Hill, Northlew.

The Hatherleigh supply has been extended by a 2" asbestos main to supply a farm and other premises and with a view to supplying later the Knackers Yard which is established $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the Hatherleigh-Highamton Road.

It has been found necessary to carry out works of repair to the North Tawton bore-hole where it was found the supply was being polluted by surface water.

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The results of the survey are as follows:

Table 2

General findings of the survey are as follows:

The results of the survey are as follows:

Table 3

The results of the survey are as follows:

Table 4

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The results of the survey are as follows:

Sewerage. No change from previous report.

Refuse Collection.

It is now under consideration that a Central Refuse Disposal System be adopted to cover the whole of the parishes in the rural district. This is to be carried out by contract or by direct labour. The establishment of such a scheme will be of great advantage, especially in the smaller parishes where it is difficult to control local dumps of tins and rubbish.

New refuse disposal sites have been prepared at Bondleigh to serve the parish of North Tawton, and at Drewsteignton for the parishes of Crockernwell and Drewsteignton. Both these sites are linking with the Central Scheme later.

Nuisances.

46 visits have been made where complaints of nuisances have been received. Informal action has been necessary for the abatement of the nuisance in 36 cases and all notices were complied with without resort to statutory action.

Section D. Housing Acts.

Little progress has been made in carrying out repairs to houses under the Act owing chiefly to the shortage of building labour and materials. It is expected that the Housing Survey will commence within the next few weeks but even so it will be very difficult for some time to enforce repairs as the present labour and material shortage is very acute.

Three houses have been reconditioned under the Rural Workers Act and advice and assistance has been forwarded in numerous cases where persons wish to avail themselves of the scheme. Four Agricultural Cottages built at Hatherleigh are now completed and tenanted.

Post-War housing plans are making progress as follows:-

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Bridestowe | - Plans and specification now in preparation for 8 houses. |
| Exbourne | - Plans and specifications now in preparation for 2 houses. |
| Chagford | - Lay-out in preparation by architect for the erection of 24 houses. |
| North Tawton | - Site purchased with a view to erecting 30 houses. |
| Drewsteignton | - Site purchased for 4 houses. |
| Throwleigh | - Site purchased for 2 houses. |
| South Zeal | - Site purchased for 2 houses. |
| South Zeal and Whiddon Down | - Sites are now being considered which will be suitable for the erection of approximately 30 houses. |

Contd.

1. The first of these is the...

2. The second is the...

It is not until we have reached the point where the river crosses the bridge that we find the water is so shallow that it is impossible to wade across. The only way to get across is by the bridge, which is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

The bridge is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

3. The third is the...

It is not until we have reached the point where the river crosses the bridge that we find the water is so shallow that it is impossible to wade across. The only way to get across is by the bridge, which is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

4. The fourth is the...

It is not until we have reached the point where the river crosses the bridge that we find the water is so shallow that it is impossible to wade across. The only way to get across is by the bridge, which is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

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5. The fifth is the...

It is not until we have reached the point where the river crosses the bridge that we find the water is so shallow that it is impossible to wade across. The only way to get across is by the bridge, which is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

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6. The sixth is the...

It is not until we have reached the point where the river crosses the bridge that we find the water is so shallow that it is impossible to wade across. The only way to get across is by the bridge, which is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

7. The seventh is the...

It is not until we have reached the point where the river crosses the bridge that we find the water is so shallow that it is impossible to wade across. The only way to get across is by the bridge, which is a very old one and is in a very poor state of repair. It is a pity that the bridge is so old and in such a poor state of repair, as it is the only way to get across the river.

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8. The eighth is the...

It is expected that as the housing survey proceeds new sites will have to be purchased in each parish for the purpose of re-housing those families now living in unfit houses and coming within Category 5.

Section E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk and Dairies Order.

It is found that owing to war conditions numerous farms are changing over stock rearing to milk production and 36 new applications have been received from farmers that they and the farm premises be registered for milk production. In consequence of these applications, structural alterations and improvements to farm buildings have been carried out in all cases. In addition to these it is found that private water supplies have been provided from wells etc., to farms where advantage has been taken of the County Council grant towards the cost.

There are now 235 registered farms in the district and there is every prospect of this number increasing during the next few years.

Milk samples taken from "Accredited" producers, retailers and suppliers of school milk and subjected to the "Methylene Blue" test show the following results:-

Accredited Producers.

Passed.....12.
Failed..... 3.

Retailers and School Suppliers.

Passed..... 9.
Failed..... 5.

By arrangement with Seale Hayne College in connection with the Milk Advisory Scheme 587 samples of milk have been taken at the farms of retailers of milk in the district.

The results of the Resazurin Test are as follows:-

'A' Standard554.

'B' " 16.

'C' " 17.

Total - 587.

Meat and Food Inspection.

No inspection of carcasses at slaughter-houses has taken place owing to the centralised slaughtering scheme but the following food from retail shops has been condemned as unfit for human consumption.

In all cases the food was surrendered and condemnation notes were issued.

Contd.

It is intended that the following information be furnished to the Bureau of the Census for its use in the preparation of the 1950 Census of the United States.

1. Name of the individual or organization
2. Address of the individual or organization

It is further intended that the following information be furnished to the Bureau of the Census for its use in the preparation of the 1950 Census of the United States.

3. Name of the individual or organization
4. Address of the individual or organization

5. Name of the individual or organization
6. Address of the individual or organization

Individual Information

Name
Address

Organizational Information

Name
Address

It is further intended that the following information be furnished to the Bureau of the Census for its use in the preparation of the 1950 Census of the United States.

7. Name of the individual or organization

Name

Address

Name

Name

Summary of Information

It is further intended that the following information be furnished to the Bureau of the Census for its use in the preparation of the 1950 Census of the United States.

8. Name of the individual or organization
9. Address of the individual or organization

(5).

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|---|
| 3 sides of beef | 260 lbs. | Decomposition due to fevered condition. |
| Bacon | 127 " | Decomposition. |
| 60 Dressed fowls | 200 " | " |
| Oatmeal | 84 " | " |
| Groats | 84 " | " |
| Butter | 17 " | Rancid. |
| Lard | 6 " | Rancid. |
| 17 tins luncheon meat | 39 " | Decomposition. |
| 1 tin sausage meat | 4½ " | " |
| Boiled Ham | 4½ " | " |
| 3 tins salmon | 27 " | " |
| 19 " pilchards | | |
| 12 " Herrings | | |
| 2 " sardines | | |
| 31 " Evaporated Milk | | " |
| 9 " Baked Beans | | " |

Knackers Yard.

A knackers yard at Hatherleigh was lacking in many respects from the standard required under the bye-laws and by reason of informal action, new plans have been submitted for the erection of a proper structure.

Section F. Control and Prevalence of Infections Diseases.

Nothing of the nature of an epidemic of infectious diseases occurred in your district during the year. Hence no strong measures such as school closure had to be resorted to.

The following infectious conditions were notified by the practitioners.

| | | |
|----------------|---------|------------------|
| Scarlet Fever | 4 cases | Two to Hospital. |
| Pneumonia | 5 " | Nil " |
| Whooping Cough | 8 " | Nil " |
| Measles | 12 " | One " |
| Diphtheria | / " | Three " |

The three cases of diphtheria occurred in the same family, the mother and two children. The origin of the disease was not discovered.

The response to diphtheria prophylaxis has, as far as the school children are concerned, been satisfactory; but much remains to be done for the pre-school population. Great difficulty is experienced in the rural areas of collecting the children to a central point. It is obviously impossible to visit every cottage in such an area as this. Perhaps when petrol becomes more abundant this difficulty will be overcome. At the close of the year it was estimated that 58 per cent of the pre-school children and 83 per cent of the school children had been adequately protected.

Tuberculosis.

Seventeen fresh cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were brought to my notice during the year by notification. This is several times the pre war average and is mainly accounted for by invaliding from the service. At the year's end thirtyfour males and thirtythree females were on the T.B. register.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
E.D. ALLEN-PRICE.

